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TAGS: [KPAO](#) [OPRC](#) [KMDR](#) [PREL](#) [MEDIA](#) [REACTION](#)

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION; BRAZILIAN LEGISLATORS AGAINST CHAVEZ; US
ANALYSTS OPINE ABOUT MAURICIO MACRI; PRESS FREEDOM IN LATIN AMERICA;
06/06/07

1. SUMMARY STATEMENT

Major international opinion pieces include the Brazilian Congress' offensive against Chavez's entry into Mercosur; and US analysts' opinion about Mauricio Macri; and the status of press freedom in Latin America.

2. OPINION PIECES AND EDITORIALS

- "Brasilia's offensive against Chavez's entry into Mercosur"

Eleonora Gosman, Sao Paulo-based correspondent for leading "Clarín," writes (06/06) "The Brazilian Congressional opposition wants to increase pressure on Venezuela. Now, it has threatened to block the ratification of the treaty allowing for Venezuela's entry into Mercosur as a full member. Brazilian center-right legislators will only support this treaty as long as Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez retracts his statements against the Brazilian Congress.

"... According to 'Folha de Sao Paulo' newspaper, two senators who oppose Lula promoted the rejection of Venezuela's entry as a full member of Mercosur.

"... Caracas' spat with Brasilia started last week when the Venezuelan leader criticized the Brazilian Congress for mimicking Washington views 'just like a parrot.'

"... Lula preferred to close the case and referred to Venezuela as an important 'partner' of Brazil. Now an OAS offensive looms on the horizon - the US asked the OAS to send a team to look into the RCTV case."

- "The US compares Macri with the New York mayor"

Ana Baron, Washington-based correspondent for leading "Clarín," wrote (06/06) "Most US analysts with expertise in Argentina believe that Mauricio Macri will win the runoff election and become the next mayor of the city. However, there is no consensus as to Macri's chances for offering a viable alternative to the party in power at the national level.

"Many analysts compare Macri with Michael Bloomberg, the renowned businessman who is currently the mayor of New York. Bloomberg has been successful as a mayor but if he ran for president no one believes he could win.

"Peter Hakim, head of the Inter American Dialogue, told 'Clarín': 'Just like New York voters are very different from those of the rest of the US, I believe porteños have nothing in common with voters from the Argentine provinces.'

"Instead, former US Ambassador to Argentina James Cheek thinks that the Capital city is a good platform for Macri to become a national figure...

"In Cheek's view, 'Bloomberg handles New York as a corporation and this is why he is successful. The same could happen for Macri... The former US Ambassador believes Kirchner will do his best to defeat Macri in the runoff election, but he doubts he will be able to do so...

"Mark Jones, an expert in Argentina who is a consultant to the US Department of State, also believes 'Filmus has no chance to win the second round of elections. Only in the event Kirchner has some 'hidden bomb' against Macri, will he be able to defeat him, but I do not think so. Ideological criticism will not suffice.' 'Porteo' voters do not buy what Kirchner says about the energy problem, inflation, the quality of democracy, the lack of investment; they simply do not think things are going well.'

"... Mark Jones does not believe that a victory in Buenos Aires elections will automatically enable Macri to become the leader of the opposition. Jones said '(Macri) will be a good case because he is a clearly non-Kirchnerist political leader, but the opposition will continue to be divided for the moment. Macri has already been in politics for five years and has revealed no ability to make alliances,' ... Jones dismissed the possibility of discontent with the Kirchners spreading to the provinces. ('There, the Kirchnerists will continue winning.')

- "Get out of the way"

Jorge Elias, columnist of daily-of-record "La Nacion," writes an op-ed piece (06/06) "... (Due to governmental pressure), Latin American media are at a crossroads: to campaign for the governments in order to show their 'patriotism' or to do real journalism and be

accused of working for 'the opposition.'

"The time of dictators is over in the region but, for many reasons, authoritarianism still abounds... - 316 journalists have been murdered in Latin America between 1987 and 2006."

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